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Monday, August 1, 2016 www.metro.us | t: MetroPhilly | f: MetroPhil

IS ISIS AFTER PARIS HILTON?

The hotel heiress thinks she's a target. 16

Maria Bello doesn't scare easily. 20

High marks for Philly as convention host. 6

BAD DREAM TEAM

Rooting for the Team USA men's basketball squad at the Summer Olympics hasn't been fun for over 20 years. We give ideas on how to fix it. 28

GETTY IMAGES

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3 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

SAFETY TEAM ARRIVES IN TEXAS TO PROBE DEADLY BALLOON CRASH

Safety officials arrived in Texas on Sunday to probe the crash of a hot air balloon that killed 16 people, amid reports that it hit a power line and caught fire before plummeting to the ground. The balloon crashed on Saturday into a field near Lockhart, about 30 miles south of Austin, on Saturday, killing all of those aboard. Aerial television footage showed remnants of the red, white and blue balloon, adorned with a large, yellow smiley face wearing sunglasses, lying flattened at the crash site. A witness told reporters the craft struck a power line and emergency responders said the basket had caught fire. REUTERS

REUTERS/IPSOS POLL: CLINTON LEADS TRUMP BY 6 POINTS

2 Hillary Clinton held a 6 percentage point lead over Donald Trump, according to a Reuters/Ipsos poll with new wording that was released on Friday. Nearly 41 percent of likely voters favor Clinton, 35 percent favor Trump, and 25 percent picked "other," according to the new July 25-29 online poll of 1,043 likely voters, which overlapped with the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia. The poll has a credibility interval of 4 percentage points. The presidential tracking poll reflects a slight change of wording from previous surveys, replacing the "neither/other" option given to respondents with just "Other." An internal review had found the word "neither" has, at times, siphoned support away from one or the other candidate. REUTERS

ONE DEAD, TWO MISSING IN MARYLAND FLOODING

3 Flooding from torrential rain killed at least one person in Ellicott City, Maryland, and at least two people are missing after floodwaters swept through the town's historic downtown, officials said on Sunday. Ellicott City was pounded by almost 6 inches of rain in two hours late on Saturday, sending the Patapsco River out of its banks, officials said. Howard County Executive Allan Kittleman said the flooding in Ellicott City, about 35 miles northeast of Washington, was worse than that from Hurricane Agnes in 1972. "I don't believe there's ever been a flood and the devastation that we've had overnight in Ellicott City," he said in an interview with Baltimore's WBAL NewsRadio.

REUTERS

Hot and humid conditions are perfect for mosquitoes. GETTY IMAGES

MOSQUITOES ON THE PROWL

You think you've been feeling bugged by the heat and humidity? Well, now you're going to feel bugged-out by the latest mosquito forecast.

Yes, I did say the latest mosquito forecast.

This is something, and it's because mosquitoes transmit diseases, with the Zika virus the biggest concern right now. Other diseases that can spread through mosquito bites are dog heartworm and West Nile virus, to name a few.

Mosquitoes get real active when it's hot and humid, and that's been the case for most of the Northeast this entire summer, with the exception of parts of New England.

When you take a look at your latest AccuWeather forecast you will see the latest mosquito forecast attached to it: Conditions are high for Boston and New York and extremely high for Philadelphia.

With all the rain during the past few days, standing water, puddles, birdbaths and boat tarps make for ideal breeding grounds for mosquitoes.

So load up on your bug spray and keep a close eye on your pets, I would not leave them outside for too long.

So the good news is the stifling heat that was smothering parts of the Northeast, especially from Philly to NYC, is gone. However, the bad news is it has been extinguished by waves of localized heavy rain, storms, flash flooding and now mosquito alerts.

Bolaris' Weather Watch

JOHN BOLARIS
@weathersavior

Storms and flash flooding will continue into Tuesday, however a true breath of fresh air will arrive Wednesday and Thursday, before more heat returns by Friday and into Saturday.

The tropics are starting to get active, and right now I'm keeping an eye on a quick-moving disturbance south of Puerto Rico that has a decent chance of developing into a tropical storm as it moves into the Western Caribbean.

Gotta go. I'm starting to itch.

Philadelphia

Today: Scattered strong storms, localized flooding, High 86

Tuesday: More scattered, strong storms, High 85

Wednesday: Nice day, humidity drops, High 84

Thursday: Mostly sunny, still nice, High 85

Friday Warmer, more humid, High 88

Weekend:

Saturday Hot, late storm, High 91

Sunday: Showers/storms, High 87

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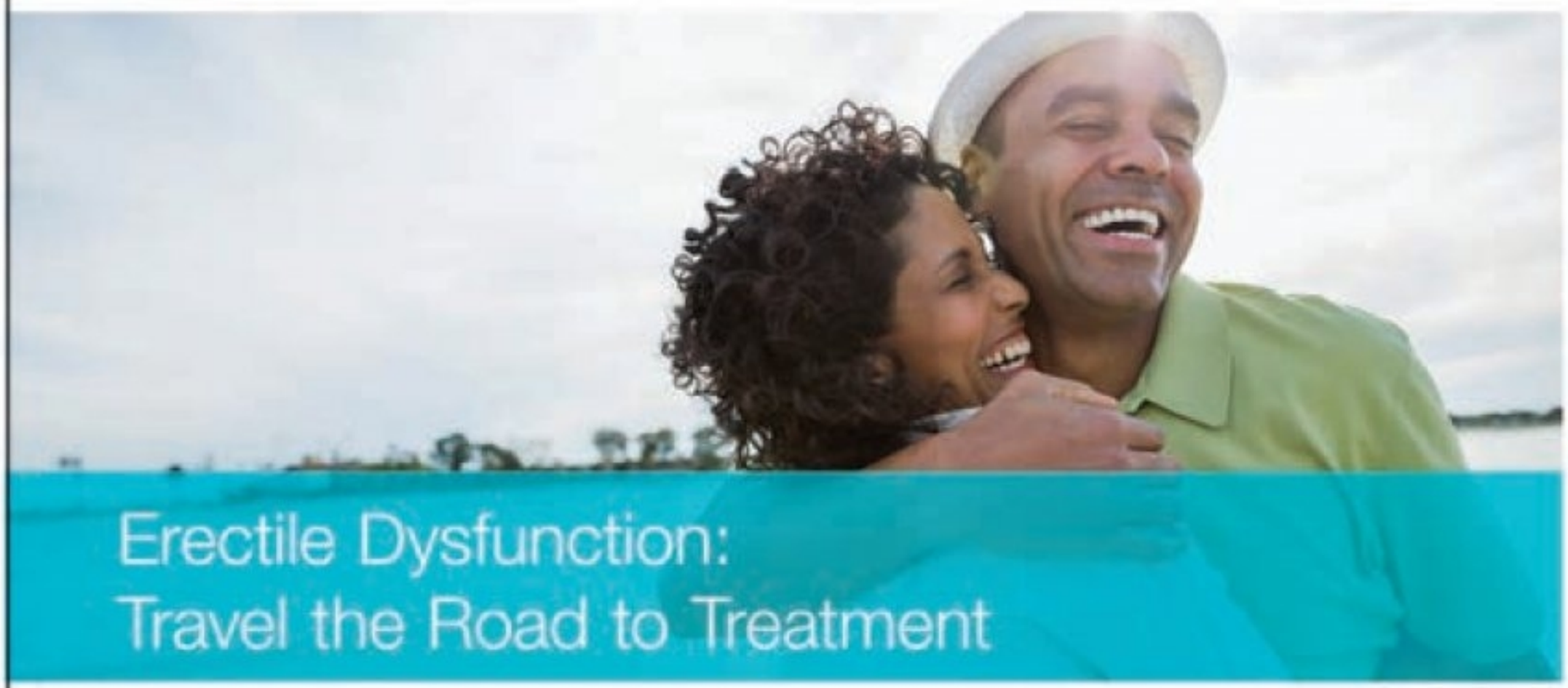

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A SEPTA train. ADAM MOSS/FLICKR

SEPTA to stop selling tickets on afternoon trains

SEPTA began receiving complaints about passengers riding for free because conductors couldn't check all riders' tickets

JASON NUCKOLLS
@MetroPhilly
letters@metro.us

Starting Monday, SEPTA will not permit Regional Rail passengers on afternoon trains leaving Philadelphia to purchase tickets while they are on the train.

In an announcement made Thursday, SEPTA said the temporary change will require riders to purchase their tickets at ticket offices before boarding, 6ABC reported. The stations affected by the policy change will be Temple, Jefferson, Suburban, 30th Street and University City Regional Rail Station between 3 and 6:30 p.m.

"Fare-collection personnel will be stationed by each stairway. Once the fare has been validated or collected, customers will be able to proceed directly to the train platform and all stairways will be open," SEPTA said in statement, according to 6ABC.

The recent scheduling changes due to the loss of the transit agency's Silverliner V cars led to the new fare-collection method when SEPTA began receiving complaints about passengers riding for free because conductors couldn't check all riders' tickets on overcrowded trains, SEPTA spokesman Andrew Busch told Philly.com.

"What we're looking at overall with this is to just have a more efficient process for the evening rush," Busch told Philly.com. "These five stations are the ones [where] we get the most traffic, and by doing this, it'll help move things along."

The fare-collection procedures on morning, evening and weekend trains will not be affected by the change, according to 6ABC, which did not give an end date for the temporary afternoon change.

BRIEFS

Church responds to Black Lives Matter vandalism

Sometime over the weekend, a vandal attacked the First Unitarian Church of Wilmington, destroying a Black Lives Matter banner displayed on church property.

According to NBC10, someone cut the word "black" from the sign, displayed along Concord Pike, in a move church officials say was deliberate. They believe the vandalism occurred late Friday into early Saturday.

On Sunday, the church, a "largely white congregation," issued a formal response, saying "this cowardly act will not prevent us from continuing to speak out about racial justice as a congregation and a religious movement."

The church said it would have a rededication ceremony later this summer and invite community members to join in a discussion about race and justice.

It said the initial decision to erect the sign was to state its commitment to the Black Lives Matter movement and to spark a conversation about racism and violence directed at people of color.

ALEXIS SACHDEV

Before vandalized, a banner for Black Lives Matter is displayed outside the First Unitarian Church of Wilmington. COURTESY FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF WILMINGTON

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Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton, left, shakes hands with supporters while she arrives to speak during a victory rally in Philadelphia in Friday. GETTY IMAGES

Philadelphia cleans up after the DNC

City and police get high marks from politicians, protesters and locals.

SAM NEWHOUSE
@scnewhouse
sam.newhouse@metro.us

All the hoopla has come and gone, and all that's left in Philadelphia is discarded political banners blowing over the streets and trash cans clogged with campaign paraphernalia.

However, just the experience of hosting the Democratic National Convention at which Hillary Clinton became the first woman to be nominated to run for president by a major poltiical party was elating, some said.

"[It was] good for Philadelphia," said Lamont Johnson, 43, a cook from North Philly. "The bottom line is bringing some money to the city. … I thought it was good that it was in Philadelphia."

Hillary Clinton lavished praise on Philly during her victory rally at Temple University on Friday.

"I am thrilled that so many Americans from everywhere got a chance to see Philadelphia," Clinton told thousands of supporters. "People kept coming back from going for walks, going to museums, going to other sites, telling me how much they were impressed."

Even protesters gave high marks to law enforcement in the city.

"I must give a huge vote of thanks to the Philadelphia Police Department," one Bernie Sanders supporter wrote on Facebook in a pro-Bernie group. "I saw a large police presence at all marches and rallies with massive presence at the Unity Fence. But these folks were friendly, caring, and even sneaked in a wink and a wave from time to time. I never felt I was being menaced nor that I should be afraid."

There were zero arrests made by city police after an estimated 13,000 protesters staged some 60 demonstrations around the city, the police department said. Pro-Bernie Sanders, Black Lives Matter, pro-marijuana, environmentalists and other activists staged marches across the city, and especially caused a ruckus at the fence around AT&T Station on Broad Street – burning American flags, chanting, shaking the fence and in some cases climbing over it.

The city did detain more than 100 protesters before letting them off with citations and $50 fines as a result of a pre-convention decision to decriminalize violations like disorderly conduct to the level of summary offenses. By comparison, around 400 protesters were arrested during the Republican National Convention in 2000.

"We had zero arrests," Mayor Jim Kenney tweeted. "I can't state that enough, 100 people this week who would have had criminal records who do not."

The Secret Service arrested and charged 11 protesters who climbed over the fence and into the secure perimeter, which the Secret Service had declared a secure zone. They face federal charges that could carry up to a year in prison, although most were released on their own recognizance.

Defense attorney Paul Hetznecker, who is representing some of the fence-jumpers, said after his clients' arraignments that he planned to challenge the Secret Service's right to establish a secure zone that kept most protesters far from the sight of most politicians and Democratic delegates.

"They set an arbitrarily-designated zone and said this zone now becomes federally protected ground based on their unfettered discretion to say so," he said. "What does that say about how First Amendment rights are being undermined?"

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BRIEF

Gunman in Austin, Texas, kills one woman, wounds three

A gunman killed a woman and seriously wounded three others in Austin early on Sunday when he shot into a crowd as people streamed out of nightclubs in the Texas capital's downtown area, police said.

The unidentified gunman opened fire at about 2:15 a.m. local time before fleeing, Austin police chief of staff Brian Manley told reporters. The motive for the attack, which occurred just minutes after bars closed, was not immediately clear.

"It was a very chaotic scene," Manley said. He described people emerging from clubs and bars running in all directions at the sound of gunfire, as police officers on patrol rushed to the scene.

The gunman killed a woman in her 20s and wounded three other women, who were transported to a local hospital with injuries that are serious but not life-threatening, Austin-Travis County Emergency Medical Services spokesman Mike Benavides told reporters.

Manley said police were seeking help from the public, including any video recordings, in an effort to find the shooter who is believed to be in his 20s. REUTERS

Official: More locally transmitted Zika in US expected

There are 6,390 confirmed Zika cases in the U.S., according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Zika literature GETTY IMAGES

The United States will likely see more cases of local Zika virus transmission going forward, a U.S. health official warned on Sunday, although it is unlikely to turn into a broader situation as seen in Brazil or Puerto Rico.

The comments come after Florida authorities on Friday reported the first sign of local transmission in the continental United States, concluding that mosquitoes likely infected four people with the virus that can cause a serious birth defect.

"We definitely don't take this lightly. This is something we always anticipated and prepared for the worst," Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said during CBS' "Face the Nation" program on Sunday. "But we do not feel this is going to turn into that broadly disseminated situation that we've seen in Brazil or that we're seeing in Puerto Rico."

He added that this is in "stark contrast" to Puerto Rico, where conditions will lead to a major outbreak.

Fauci said that health authorities are working to reduce mosquitoes in affected areas, and encouraged individuals to stay indoors, cover up and use insect repellent.

He added that "phase one" trials of one contender of the Zika vaccine will likely start in coming weeks. If that's successful, there will be wider trials beginning early 2017. REUTERS

Powerball tickets GETTY IMAGES

NH ticket matches winning numbers for $487M jackpot

A Powerball ticket sold in New Hampshire matched the winning numbers for the game's jackpot of $487 million in a drawing on Saturday that marked the eighth-biggest lottery prize ever in the United States, a lottery official said.

The numbers drawn in the 11 p.m. EDT drawing on Saturday were 11, 17, 21, 23, 32 and the Powerball number of 5, according to the Powerball website.

A single winning ticket was sold in New Hampshire, said North Dakota Lottery director Randy Miller, chair of the Powerball group. In some past drawings, the jackpot has been split between multiple winning tickets.

The single ticket from the latest drawing is worth the winner's choice of $487 million spread over 30 years or $341.7 million in a lump-sum payment, before federal taxes.

This was the fifth largest Powerball jackpot in the game's history.

The Powerball game is based on lottery tickets sold for $2 apiece. It is played in 44 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. REUTERS

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Clinton says Russian intelligence services hacked DNC

Clinton GETTY IMAGES

The U.S. has not publicly accused Russia of being behind the hack of Democratic Party computers. Cyber security experts and U.S. officials, however, said they believed Russia engineered the release of the emails to influence the U.S. presidential election.

Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton said Russian intelligence services hacked into Democratic National Committee computers and she accused Republican contender Donald Trump of showing support for Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"We know that Russian intelligence services hacked into the DNC and we know that they arranged for a lot of those emails to be released and we know that Donald Trump has shown a very troubling willingness to back up Putin, to support Putin," Clinton said in an interview with "Fox News Sunday."

Asked if she believed Putin wanted Trump to win the White House, Clinton said she was not going to jump to that conclusion.

"But I think laying out the facts raises serious issues about Russian interference in our elections, in our democracy," Clinton told Fox in the interview, taped Saturday.

The United States would not tolerate that from any other country, especially one considered an adversary, she said.

The New York businessman has praised Putin, saying he was a stronger leader than President Barack Obama, a Democrat.

Trump last week invited Russia to dig up tens of thousands of "missing" emails from Clinton's time at the State Department. "Russia, if you're listening, I hope you're able to find the 30,000 emails that are missing," Trump told reporters.

The Republican presidential nominee for the Nov. 8 election later said he was being "sarcastic" in his comments, which raised concerns among intelligence experts and criticism that Trump was urging a foreign government to spy on Americans. REUTERS

"For Trump to both encourage that and to praise Putin despite what appears to be a deliberate effort to try to affect the election I think raises national security issues."

Clinton

BRIEF

Russia says spyware found in state computer networks

Russia's intelligence service said that the computer networks of 20 organizations, including state agencies and defense companies, have been infected with spyware in what it described as a targeted and coordinated attack.

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) said the malware and the way the networks were infected were similar to those used in previous cases of cyber espionage found in Russia and other countries. The agency did not say who it suspected of being behind the attacks.

"Information technology resources of government agencies, scientific and military institutions, defense industry companies and other entities involved in crucial infrastructure have been infected," the FSB said in a statement on its website.

The FSB's announcement follows reports of cyber attacks on the Democratic National Committee and the fundraising committee for Democratic candidates for the House of Representatives.

REUTERS

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Trump rebuts criticism by Army father at DNC

The most emotional moment of the Democratic National Convention was the speech by Khizr Khan.

Donald Trump rejected criticism from the father of a soldier killed in Iraq who said the Republican presidential nominee had "sacrificed nothing and no one" and questioned whether the mother was allowed to speak during the couple's appearance at the Democratic convention.

"I think I've made a lot of sacrifices," Trump told ABC News in excerpts of an interview posted on Saturday. "I work very, very hard."

Khizr Khan, a U.S. citizen of Pakistani origin and a Muslim, won widespread praise when he spoke Thursday at the Democratic National Convention, telling the story of his son, U.S. Army Captain Humayun Khan, who was killed by a bomb in Iraq in 2004.

He also attacked Trump for proposing a temporary ban on Muslims entering the United States and asked if the candidate had read the U.S. Constitution.

He pulled out a pocket-copy from the inside of his suit coat, in one of the most commented moments on the night that Hillary Clinton accepted her party's nomination for president

"Did Hillary's script writers write it?" Trump asked ABC's George Stephanopoulos in the interview, saying he has indeed sacrificed by employing thousands of people, and raising "millions of dollars" for veterans.

Khizr Khan holds up a booklet of the U.S. Constitution as he delivers remarks at the Democratic National Convention. GETTY IMAGES

Trump said Khan appeared "very emotional and probably looked like a nice guy to me."

But the businessman also cast doubt on why Khan's wife did not speak.

"She was standing there, she had nothing to say, she probably, maybe she wasn't allowed to have anything to say, you tell me," Trump said.

Clinton at a campaign rally Saturday night in Youngstown, Ohio, said the Khans specifically and Muslims generally are the most recent recipients of Trump's insults, and referenced his past statements about immigrants and the disabled.

"It's a long list my friends. I don't know, maybe he doesn't have anything positive to say," Clinton said. REUTERS

Trump says 'not thrilled' with dates of presidential debates

Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump said he is unhappy with the dates set for his televised debates with White House rival Hillary Clinton, putting him at odds with an independent commission that set the calendar almost a year ago.

The dates for the three debates ahead of the Nov. 8 presidential election "will serve the American public well," the nonpartisan Commission on Presidential Debates said in a statement on Sunday, noting they were set a year in advance.

The commission was responding to complaints from Trump and other Republicans that the debate dates — Monday, Sept. 26, Sunday, Oct. 9, and Wednesday, Oct. 19 — should be changed because of conflicts with televised National Football League games.

"I think two of the three are against the NFL, so I'm not thrilled with that," Trump said in an interview with ABC's "This Week" that aired on Sunday.

The commission, established in 1987 to organize and manage the presidential debates, said it is impossible to avoid all sporting events when scheduling the debates. It added that the debates have never been rescheduled because of such conflicts.

Trump, who tweeted on Friday that Clinton was "trying to rig the debates" so that fewer people would watch, suggested in the ABC interview that the former secretary of state wanted the debates to be held "when nobody's home" to watch.

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SCORCHED EARTH

The balloons have popped, the confetti has been swept and now nothing remains between the candidates and the election except three months of slash and burn campaigning. Board your windows. Lock your doors. Here are my three things to watch this week in politics.

1. BOUNCE
As I predicted last week, Donald Trump came out of the Republican convention with a boost in the polls, and now all eyes are on Hillary Clinton to see if she does as well — or better. The star-studded Democratic convention was intended to not merely pump up the base, but also draw in some independents and maybe even a few disgruntled Republicans. History says she'll see results, but how long will they last? Trump's bet: not long. He was slamming her before she could even get off of the stage.

TOM FOREMAN
Opinion

CNN's Tom Foreman is the author of the book "My Year of Running Dangerously."

2. TRUST ME
The number one agenda item for both nominees should be the matter of trust — as in, convincing voters they can be trusted. Both have done a lousy job at it so far, considering the majority of people still do not see either contender as trustworthy. So I'm waiting to see if either can crack the code. Still, I'm not holding my breath. Both parties have shown little talent for building trust lately, but plenty for tearing down the other side. As they storm the trail this week, you can expect more character assassination than you'll find in "Macbeth."

3. SHOW ME THE MONEY
Repubs who are worried about the Trump effect will be watching their wallets this week — to see if they get any fatter. There are deep concerns some big money donors remain skittish about backing the New York billionaire and that could affect fundraising all up and down the GOP ticket. Listen for talk about this in the backwash of the conventions, because losing the White House is one thing; losing one or more houses of Congress, too? That would be cataclysmic for GOPers.

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Opponents target N. Carolina transgender bathroom law

North Carolina is the only state in the country to mandate that people use multiple-occupancy public restrooms and changing facilities that correspond with the sex on their birth certificate rather than their gender identity, placing it at the forefront of the latest civil rights frontier in America. GETTY IMAGES

For 20-year-old Payton McGarry, a transgender man and college student, the North Carolina law barring him from using public bathrooms consistent with his gender identity means a routine part of life now dictates his day.

He limits how much he drinks to avoid using a bathroom away from home. He looks for gender-neutral restrooms at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where he attends, but has missed instruction time when he cannot find one in his classroom buildings.

"There is a lot of insecurity about being in public spaces," the accounting and business major said in a telephone interview. "If I know I'm going to be out an extended period of time, I just don't drink a lot."

On Monday, McGarry and other opponents of the law, known as House Bill 2 (HB 2), will ask a federal judge in Winston-Salem to block enforcement of its bathroom provisions while the legal fight against the full measure, enacted in March, plays out.

The restrictions put transgender people, particularly students at public schools, in an untenable position, said Chris Brook, one of the American Civil Liberties Union lawyers challenging the measure.

"It forces all trans kids in our state to choose between breaking the law and using the correct restroom or using the wrong restroom, which could put them in a perilous situation," he said.

Republican lawmakers have not been persuaded by such arguments, or boycotts of the state by corporations, conventions, entertainers and the National Basketball Association, which this month said it was pulling its 2017 All-Star Game from Charlotte in protest of the law, which has been decried by critics as discriminatory.

Lawyers for Republican Gov. Pat McCrory argue the measure protects the safety and privacy expectations of the state's residents.

"Plaintiffs purportedly seek to overturn a single state statute, but in reality they seek to overturn millennia of accepted practice by which men and women utilize separate facilities for using the restroom, bathing and changing clothes," the governor's lawyers said in a court filing opposing efforts to block HB 2.

McCrory's office did not reply to a request for comment ahead of Monday's hearing.

The University of North Carolina, also named as a defendant, welcomes "resolution of these difficult issues by the court so that we can refocus our efforts on our primary mission — educating students," President Margaret Spellings said in a statement.

Katy and Mac Schafer hope their family's story will help change minds. Their eldest child, 17-year-old Hunter, was assigned the gender of male at birth but now lives and identifies as female.

She attends high school at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts in Winston-Salem, where until HB 2 passed she used the women's restroom in keeping with the guidance given to her by medical professionals.

Her mother felt sick when lawmakers took that option away. REUTERS

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Paris Hilton thinks she could be an ISIS target

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

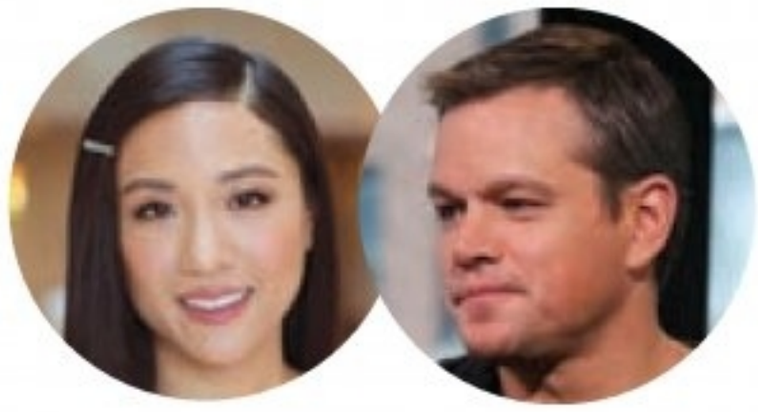
Being famous isn't all that it's cracked up to be — according to Paris Hilton, at least.

The socialite and hotel heiress, who is currently working as a DJ in Ibiza, recently told a Spanish newspaper that she's afraid her celebrity status might make her a potential ISIS target.

Responding to the recent terrorist attacks in Nice and Germany, Hilton said in an interview that she worries about being the victim of an attack. "I'm constantly moving around from one country to another, and I'm a famous person who could be a definite target for an attack, and that is something that sometimes terrifies me," she said.

Clearly, a jetsetting lifestyle isn't all fun and games for Hilton. Still, fear won't be stopping her anytime soon — earlier this month, the 35-year-old revealed that she'll be following in her family's footsteps and launching her own chain of luxury hotels in Dubai, New York and Las Vegas.

Constance Wu slams Matt Damon's controversial new film



Constance Wu is the latest actress to lash out against the lack of diversity in Hollywood.

On Friday, the "Fresh Off the Boat" star posted a statement on Twitter that blasted Matt Damon's upcoming film, "The Great Wall." In the film, the 45-year-old actor plays a soldier in ancient China who defends the Great Wall against a mythical attack.

The casting decision quickly attracted the attention — and disapproval — of Wu. "We have to stop perpetuating the racist myth that only a white man can save the world. It's not based in actual fact," she wrote. "Our heroes don't look like Matt Damon. They look like Malala. Ghandi. Mandela."

Wu is one of several people to point out the lack of Asian representation in Hollywood, an issue that has gained noticeable traction recently — earlier this year, Scarlett Johansson's casting in a remake of the Japanese anime "Ghost in the Shell" and Tilda Swinton's portrayal of a Tibetan character in "Doctor Strange" both drew heavy criticism of Hollywood's "white-washing" tendencies.

Hours after publishing her statement, Wu followed up with another tweet to clear the air with Damon. "For the millionth time it's NOT abt blame. Not blaming Damon, the studio, the Chinese financiers. It's not about blame, It's about AWARENESS," she wrote.

"The Great Wall" is scheduled for release in February 2017.

the word

CHLOE TSANG
letters@metro.us

Kanye tells Tidal and Apple to squash beef

Kanye West has finally taken a break from his drama with Taylor Swift to focus on another feud — the music streaming battle between Tidal and Apple Music.

On Saturday, the "Famous" rapper took to Twitter to rant about the two music industry giants, claiming their beef was "f—king up the music game."

West, alongside Jay Z, Beyonce, and several other high-profile musicians, is a co-founder of Tidal.

The battle began back in 2015, when Apple released its own music streaming platform just three months after Tidal's launch. Since then, the two have been competing over exclusive content, making it difficult for fans to access their favorite music in one place.

Despite ongoing rumors that Apple might try and acquire Tidal, West's social media posts suggest these talks aren't going so smoothly. "Apple give Jay his check for Tidal now and stop trying to act like you Steve," the 39-year-old rapper tweeted.

West is calling for a meeting between himself, Apple CEO Tim Cook, Jay Z and several other music execs to try and end the feud. "We all gon be dead in 100 Years. Let the kids have the music," he wrote.

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Dating is not a numbers game

LAURIE DAVIS EDWARDS

Single and Swiping

Laurie Davis Edwards is the founder of eFlirt, an online dating concierge service, and the best-selling author of "Love @ First Click: The Ultimate Guide to Online Dating."

No formula can help you find love says our expert. ISTOCK

Recently a client sent over a spreadsheet of his results with online dating. It was incredibly detailed — broken down by platform and multiple data points, such as the number of women who replied to his first messages, then second messages and so on.

He's not my first — I've seen other spreadsheets.

It seems simple to run the dating data when it's quantified on an app or site, so naturally, many online daters get the urge to crunch numbers. But there's a major problem with taking the fun of dating and turning it into a numbers game.

Numbers can represent quantity, but what they can never completely convey is quality. In your dating life, who you are meeting and the way you are connecting on your dates is much more important than how many matches are in your inbox. Quality cannot be quantified in a spreadsheet.

If you're a number cruncher, you might logically understand this but still feel resistant, like my client. When I told him that not only should he not concern himself with numbers, but that OkCupid data that suggest excellent messages receive a 40 percent response rate is outdated, he asked me, "Well, what should the average response rate be for me?"

The truth: There is no magic formula that says if you get a certain percentage of replies on a dating site, you'll find love. After working with thousands of online daters for nearly a decade, I've found that there is no average. There are too many variables, like which platform you're on and whom you're choosing to message. Some online daters receive a 5 percent response rate while others reach 40 percent. But in either case, love doesn't fit neatly into an empty cell on a spreadsheet.

One of our clients received a 90 percent response rate ... yet she is still single. Another married the first man who responded. So next time you get the urge to count the messages in your inbox, ask yourself: Am I truly connecting with the matches I meet? When you meet the right person, none of the numbers matter.

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Temple alumna Tamron Hall talks her college days and Ishkabibble's

The Texas native says she got her soul in Philly.

JENNIFER LOGUE
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jennifer.logue@metro.us

You may know Tamron Hall from "The Today Show" on NBC and "NewsNation" on MSNBC. What you may not know is that the award-winning journalist has Philly roots, earning her broadcast journalism degree at Temple University, where she now serves on the board of trustees. Hall was in town covering the 2016 Democratic National Convention last week and took time to chat with us about her college days and more.

How does it feel to see Hillary Clinton nominated this week as the first female presidential candidate?

It was incredible. I said

Find out what else Tamron Hall has to say at Metro.us. NBC NEWS/TODAY

today on-air on "The Today Show," you can put politics aside and acknowledge when it is the first black person or person of color, and it is important for us as Americans, people who support democracy, to say the same thing. You don't have to subscribe to her ideology or her politics, but to ignore as we sit steps away from Independence Hall that we have a woman now nominated for president representing a major political party, it is incredible.

So your time at Temple. How was that?

Phenomenal. Time of my life. I tell people I was born in Texas, but I got my soul in Philly! It's phenomenal. I'm honored to be a board member. I never imagined I would be on the board of the university that I graduated from.

I went to school on student loans. My parents didn't have the money to write a check for me to go there so it was important for me to get in and out in four years and work very hard. I had a job from the day I started. I'd take SEPTA to not very far from where Wells Fargo is — it was the Spectrum back then. I worked for Joe Frazier and his partner Burke Watson, I worked at a jewelry store on Market Street — I worked everywhere! I probably had 900 jobs. [Laughs] ... From day one, I worked until the day I left, but it was a wonderful balance of the opportunity of higher education but also the reminder that I wasn't here to play around.

Hall monitor

Watch Tamron Hall on "NewsNation" weekdays on MSNBC at 11 a.m. EST

Now that you're in town for the DNC, what are some of your favorite places to visit?

This is so hard. I have so many favorites but I would have to say Parc at lunch. Get a table outside to see all the hip people — phenomenal. Capofitto for the gelato and the pizza. If you want kind of romantic, Morimoto. Very hot and sexy.

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Maria Bello doesn't do horror

But the actress made an exception with "Lights Out," which she found unusually smart.

MATT PRIGGE
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matt.prigge@metro.us

Maria Bello has managed to mostly avoid one genre: the horror film. But "Lights Out" was different, even if it is about a mysterious entity that haunts a dysfunctional family. The family in question includes Sophie (Bello), a newly widowed mother with mental illness who might have a strong, long-lasting connection with the spirit that can turn victims into piles of gnarly flesh. The actress, 49, talks about her own connection to the material and why this is one horror film that actually scared her.

GETTY IMAGES

I have to admit, while I found this film creepy, I rarely find horror films scary, per se. I tend to be more scared by films about real things, like cancer or global annihilation or death.

Yeah, I'm like you. I don't scare easily, I have to say, and I don't like horror films. But this one, I went to see it with my friends and we were screaming and grabbing onto each other. I was watching it between my fingers. I thought it was that scary. I think anything with mannequins, clowns or puppets — forget about it. That is scary just in itself.

Some actresses have said that they started off in horror films because it was the only genre that regularly starred women. They can be progressive, at least in that sense.

I hadn't thought about that. I was thinking the opposite. I don't usually see slasher movies, but isn't it usually the women with big boobs who get killed?

Yes. This is the complicated history of gender studies in the horror film, where there's the final girl who defeats the villain, but is also usually the only virgin.

Of course! God forbid the heroine has sex or is a sexual being in any way. You have to be the good girl to get rid of the demons.

They defeat demons with the power of their virginity. But you've actually managed, with an exception or two, to avoid this genre.

I've been offered these types of films before, and I hadn't really connected with anything until this one. It was because of the character. She was complicated. I have a shared history with her, with my own gift of bipolar disorder, and I felt like I'd get to bring that to the screen in a really realistic way.

It's strange how seldom we see mental illness portrayed in a manner like this, where we see how it affects everyone around them.

If you take all the horror away, it really is a stand-alone drama about mental illness and how it affects a family. I based my performance on real-life experiences, which I wrote about in my book last year "Whatever … Love Is Love," about my own dynamic with the disease. I realized after being medicated that this was really a gift. I wanted to portray the reality onscreen of what it is to have a mental illness and how it really is a family disease. It affects everyone around you. It was really important to me to show the truth.

Scream queen

I'm going to guess you never had to learn how to scream for a horror film when you were first studying acting.

Yeah, we went to all the special scream classes. [Laughs] No, I think doing a horror film and doing a romantic comedy is exactly the same. You look up and there's 50 guys standing around you, scratching their balls, drinking a Coca-Cola. And every time they're about to say action they're like, "OK cut! We've gotta fix that light!" So by the time you actually get to scream, you scream because you're so annoyed.

Maria Bello plays a mother whose family is plagued by a mysterious entity in "Lights Out." WARNER BROS. PICTURES

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Sushi School in University City

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Fancy learning how to make sushi? Take this class. ALL PHOTOS ALBERT LEE

Texas may be the last place that comes to mind when you think of sushi, but don't let the Lone Star state fool you. "It's where I learned the art of making sushi," says instructor Chef Keunsik Lee as he shares his culinary history with students during a session of Sushi School at POD restaurant in University City.

Welcome to Sushi Making 101, Texas-style! Taught Monday-Wednesday throughout the summer, eager foodies have the opportunity to learn the proper technique in making some of their favorites rolls while also getting fed at the same time. Who says you can take copious notes on an empty stomach?

Let's begin. Sushi is simply defined as fermented rice. Although fish has been a popular ingredient, it's not the only protein that's served in a roll. Ask the folks in Hawaii how much they love their Spam. Lee is also quick to point out that your sushi isn't judged on the quality of fish but how good the rice tastes.

"Your fish should hopefully be fresh, but using last night's rice will ruin all the flavor," he said.

When you deconstruct sushi, it's actually 80 percent rice and only 20 percent fish.

Enough talk, time to make some California rolls! You're given a sushi mat, imitation crab meat, avocado, cucumber, nori, sushi rice (3.5 ounces is the ideal amount) and special plastic gloves that are shipped from Japan (they prevent rice from sticking to your fingers). After spreading out the ingredients on the nori, you're ready to roll.

Once students present a somewhat presentable example of their version of a California roll, Lee serves them back to each guest so they can taste their creation. If you're feeling you need more practice, chef reminds the class: "I spent nine years doing this."

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Students at the International Culinary Center test out new dishes PROVIDED

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HOW TO GET AHEAD

Taking the heat at culinary school

A certificate program at the International Culinary Center opens doors in and out of the kitchen.

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When Chef Candy Argondizza, vice president of culinary and pastry arts at the International Culinary Center (ICC) in Manhattan, brings new students into the kitchen, she makes sure they can take the heat.

"As I tell students all the time, this profession chooses you; you don't choose it," she says.

As a 37-year industry veteran and an alum of esteemed New York eateries such as Remi and Tavern on the Green, Argondizza knows firsthand just how grueling a chef's life can be. That's precisely why the professional culinary arts program at ICC replicates the "vigor and tenacity" of a professional kitchen.

"It is extremely rewarding work, but you have to really want to do it," says Argondizza.

Chef Candy PROVIDED

What the program is cooking up

Students in ICC's professional culinary arts certificate program undertake four months of full-time or six months of part-time instruction, followed by a 200-hour externship. The school attracts a range of students with varying ability levels, and federal financial aid and scholarships are available for those who qualify.

The only program prerequisites are a high school diploma and a short essay. However, a zest for the culinary arts is an unofficial must.

"It's physical, it's demanding, but I think it really speaks to people who don't fit into a 9-to-5 desk job, who want to be creative, who want to be on their feet, who want a goal-oriented way of life. Every day you have a list and you just check it off, and there's something really gratifying about that," she says.

Chef-instructors teach students how to braise, poach, grill, saute and roast, increasing the complexity and nuance of their lessons each month. In a typical class, lectures and demos are followed by student attempts to duplicate dishes at their own stations. Afterward, the chef-instructor tastes and critiques.

"At school we give them that sort of training because they're getting constant feedback from the chefs—whether it needs salt, it needs acid, it's too thin, it's too thick—so you get used to the constant critiquing, which I think sets you up for when you leave here," says Argondizza.

In part, that's where the externship comes in. Students are encouraged to select an eatery that aligns with their abilities and professional goals; one recent graduate decided to do his externship at Jacques Torres Chocolate in Brooklyn to pursue an interest in chocolate production. The student, a Hawaii native, hoped to bring what he learned back home, where he could take advantage of Hawaii's huge cocoa industry and perhaps start a small company.

Professional opportunities

ICC students have a 91.5 percent graduation rate as of 2015, and alums work at a range of culinary hotspots nationwide. In Philadelphia, the average salary for a chef de cuisine is $61,983, according to job and recruiting site Glassdoor.

The program leads students down myriad paths within the food industry.

"Not everyone might want to be in the kitchen anymore; they might want to be a food blogger or a food stylist, a caterer, a personal chef—but we feel strongly that, no matter what you want to do, you still have to understand what happens in the process of cooking," says Argondizza.

In a changing industry, Argondizza is both old-school and forward-thinking. She swears by Jacques Pépin's legendary "La Technique," and oversees a cutting-edge curriculum. She's firm in her belief that only "one-tenth of one percent" of chefs became celebrities a la Gordon Ramsay and Bobby Flay, and if you're getting a culinary certification because you want to be famous, you're probably in the wrong industry. And she's also truly passionate about what she does each day.

"It's not for everybody, but the people that it really resonates with love it. It's hard work, but it pays off."

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Careers during cancer

During treatment, continuing to work can provide a sense of accomplishment and normalcy.

Co-workers can provide support and camaraderie during cancer treatment. ISTOCK

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Cancer is not a death sentence. Many people living with the disease continue to work throughout their diagnosis and treatment.

But by its very nature, cancer is disruptive. No one finds working while receiving chemo or radiation an "orderly situation," says Rebecca Nellis, chief mission officer at the nonprofit Cancer and Careers.

However, a positive workplace can be a tremendous source of support during a challenging time. A recent Cancer and Careers survey found that 75 percent of respondents wanted to keep working after their diagnosis because it provides them with a sense of pride and accomplishment that is critical to recovery.

Nellis, who works with cancer patients, offered her insights on working during treatment.

Gather information

Before revealing your diagnosis to your employer — if, in fact, you chose to do so — fact-finding is a crucial first step. Knowing the timeline for your treatment plan, the possible side effects and precisely how they will affect your ability to do your job can help you present the situation to an employer feeling informed and prepared, explains Nellis.

Next, comb through your employee handbook and gather info about disability and sick leave policies. Understanding exactly what you're entitled to can give you confidence when sharing sensitive information.

Know your rights

Nellis emphasizes that it's crucial to know your rights guaranteed by the Americans with Disabilities Act. (Though the word "cancer" isn't anywhere in the title, the law still applies.)

"The ADA does two important things: protect from discrimination and provide a reasonable accommodation," explains Nellis.

A "reasonable accommodation" means that employers are required to provide assistance or modifications that allow employees who have a disability to continue to do their job.

"If we're talking about someone who is a retail manager and fatigue is gong to be a major factor, can they stand for eight hours a day?" says Nellis.

Know what support looks like

A pro-tip for those who work with someone going through cancer treatment: Don't coddle or condescend.

"Co-workers shouldn't become so focused on the cancer that they forget the colleague they're talking to," says Nellis. "They're there because they want to work, and work provides normalcy."

Even gestures that come from a good place, like running an office fundraiser or taking on additional responsibility on behalf of a sick colleague, need buy-in.

"If they're really private, they may not want something [calling attention to their illness]," adds Nellis. "Make sure you run everything by the colleague, and get their support."

Try offering to do very specific tasks — buying lunch for a week or assisting with a particular part of the job, suggests Nellis. This can send a message of support without smothering.

Know your worth outside of work

In some instances, people with cancer stay on the job out of necessity: Work provides the income and benefits paying for their treatment. Other times, the motivation is personal: Self-worth and work often are inextricably linked.

"We work because it's part of our identity, so it really challenges a sense of self," Nellis states.

That's why if working becomes untenable, some people "may struggle to see themselves as more than just their cancer diagnosis."

This sense of loss is particularly hard for people in their 20s and 30s, because they're "prone to seeing their job as a key part of their identity ... you're part of something, and most people don't want to worry about being left behind," says Nellis.

If a cancer patient is forced to leave work, Nellis encourages them to ask about financial assistance programs or disability insurance.

Mind the gap (on your resume)

For cancer patients who do take time off, the return to work can "become a really stressful piece of the puzzle," says Nellis. "We spend a lot of time working with people about how they're going to sell themselves."

In some cases, a life-changing illness is an opportunity for survivors to professionally pivot. Nellis has worked with many people who wonder if "60 hours a week is worth it" after they've faced their mortality.

Though she doesn't have all the answers, Nellis says career-related questions often change after cancer.

"It's more about what gives you meaning? What do you derive joy from?"

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All signs point to Eagles TE Ertz thriving under Pederson regime

Zach Ertz should have more red zone success under Doug Pederson.

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The Eagles' red zone offense was nothing short of an uncertainty under former head coach Chip Kelly, ranking 23rd in the NFL in 2014 before climbing up to the middle of the pack at 15th overall with a 55 percent success rate.

First-year head coach Doug Pederson saw his Kansas City offense fair much better in that department, averaging a top 10 red zone efficiency between the last two seasons. He believes the Eagles will follow that route this season and much of that has to do with his tight ends, particularly Zach Ertz.

For the past three offseasons, this one included, the hype around Ertz has only grown. This time it may be warranted after the way he ended the 2015 season, totaling 35 catches for 450 yards and one touchdown over that span.

"Zach is a great tight end, a great team player and a leader on this football team," Pederson said. "I love all of our tight ends, but in his case he can definitely create some opportunities for us. His ability to catch the football and to separate … he's a big target over the middle."

Pederson hopes to use that big target more in the red zone.

"We expect to use his talent down there and his size to separate and make plays down there," Pederson said.

Zach Ertz found the end zone twice in 2015. GETTY IMAGES

Ertz has caught just one touchdown in the red zone in each of the past two seasons after hauling in three of them as a rookie. By comparison, Pederson's Pro Bowl tight end in Kansas City, Travis Kelce, has seen seven of his 10 career touchdowns result in a score with four of them coming last season.

To further compare the two, both players come in at 6-foot-5 with Kelce weighing in only 10 pounds heavier. The two each play similar games as well, which should result in that desired offensive production from Ertz.

Through his first three years, the Stanford product has picked up some nuances that come with producing in the red zone. As Pederson put it, defenses are dropping eight back now whenever the offense gets within the 12 yard line; that makes it much harder to find holes.

"You have to be able to go up there and make plays," Ertz said. "I think my number is going to be called a little bit more this year."

Ertz admits his usage in the red zone hasn't been what he would have liked, but that the early stages under Pederson is making him more optimistic about his fourth season.

"I'm really excited about this one, "Ertz said.

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Rooting for Coach K is a chore. GETTY IMAGES

ROOTING FOR USA BASKETBALL IS NO FUN

MATT BURKE

OPINION

Matt Burke is the National Sports Editor and a columnist at Metro.us

Follow him on Twitter @burke_metro

The absolute worst rooting experience you can have as a sports fan is when you find yourself rooting for a team to simply not lose.

The high of victory for teams like these is really not that high, but the low of defeat is depression city. Yeah, it's fine that your team is expected to win it all, but those ridiculous expectations ruin the rooting and viewing experience entirely.

Rooting for the USA men's basketball team at the Olympics has been like this for 20 years now. There's little fun in watching these multimillionaires attempt to bring home the gold, other than getting to see the occasional highlight reel alley-oop (something that happens 15 to 20 times during each and every NBA All-Star game).

Now, the original Dream Team in 1992 — with Michael Jordan, Larry Bird, Magic Johnson, Charles Barkley, Patrick Ewing et al. — was great. Never before had we seen a collection of talent like that on one court together and never before had we seen that level of dominance.

But dominance like that quickly gets boring. Remember who was on Dream Team II in 1996 in Atlanta? Nope, neither do I. In 2004 in Athens, Argentina won the gold medal. Team USA earned the most pathetic bronze medal in Olympic history. If memory serves, there was no ticker-tape parade down the Canyon of Heroes for Allen Iverson, Tim Duncan, Stephon Marbury, a young LeBron James and a young Carmelo Anthony when they returned to the states that summer.

Dominance had turned to apathy when it came to USA basketball, and now today we're in this superawkward third stage where we're just hoping Team USA 2016 doesn't screw this thing up.

Making matters more awkward is that the best player on this summer's team is Kevin Durant, who just four weeks ago became the most hated athlete in the U.S. Durant decided to join the Golden State Warriors in an effort to create the most dominant team in NBA history. Now, he will look to change the opinions of thousands of jaded American basketball fans over the next few weeks by trying to beat Venezuela by 60 points and by generally attempting to — you guessed it — dominate. In other words, he will apologize for his desire to dominate by dominating players who will never sniff an NBA floor.

Meanwhile, the head coach of Team USA is the lovable Mike Krzyzewski, who has a popular Facebook page dedicated to him titled, "Mike Krzyzewski is the Antichrist." As if Coach K wasn't hard enough to root for to begin with, he's been yelling at his players during these recent exhibition games to sit down on the bench and "not have so much fun." DeMar DeRozan tried a 360 dunk, nearly decapitating a Chinese defender this past week and Coach K flipped out because a couple guys (remember, multimillionaire men) on his bench actually had the nerve to get excited. Imagine what Coach K would have done to Barkley in '92 when he was throwing elbows at 160-pound Angolan "power" forwards? Here's my solution to all this crap: Have a real Team USA.

Many claim that the reason the rest of the world has closed the gap is because these other countries have players who have played together for years. And, yes, that's part of the issue for sure.

But why can't the USA assemble a team of blue-chip high schoolers every four years and build for the next Olympics? There would be new cycle of young talent every Olympic summer. Have these kids play together for four years during each and every summer. Hell, sign some of them to Team USA contracts and have them skip the farce that is college basketball altogether.

Basketball junkies would salivate over getting to watch these teams grow over the course of four years, and it would be highly intriguing to see if these groups of talented youngins could eventually take down the men who are on the rest of the world's rosters during the Olympics.

That would certainly be a fun rooting experience. Much more fun than the one we're about to undertake.

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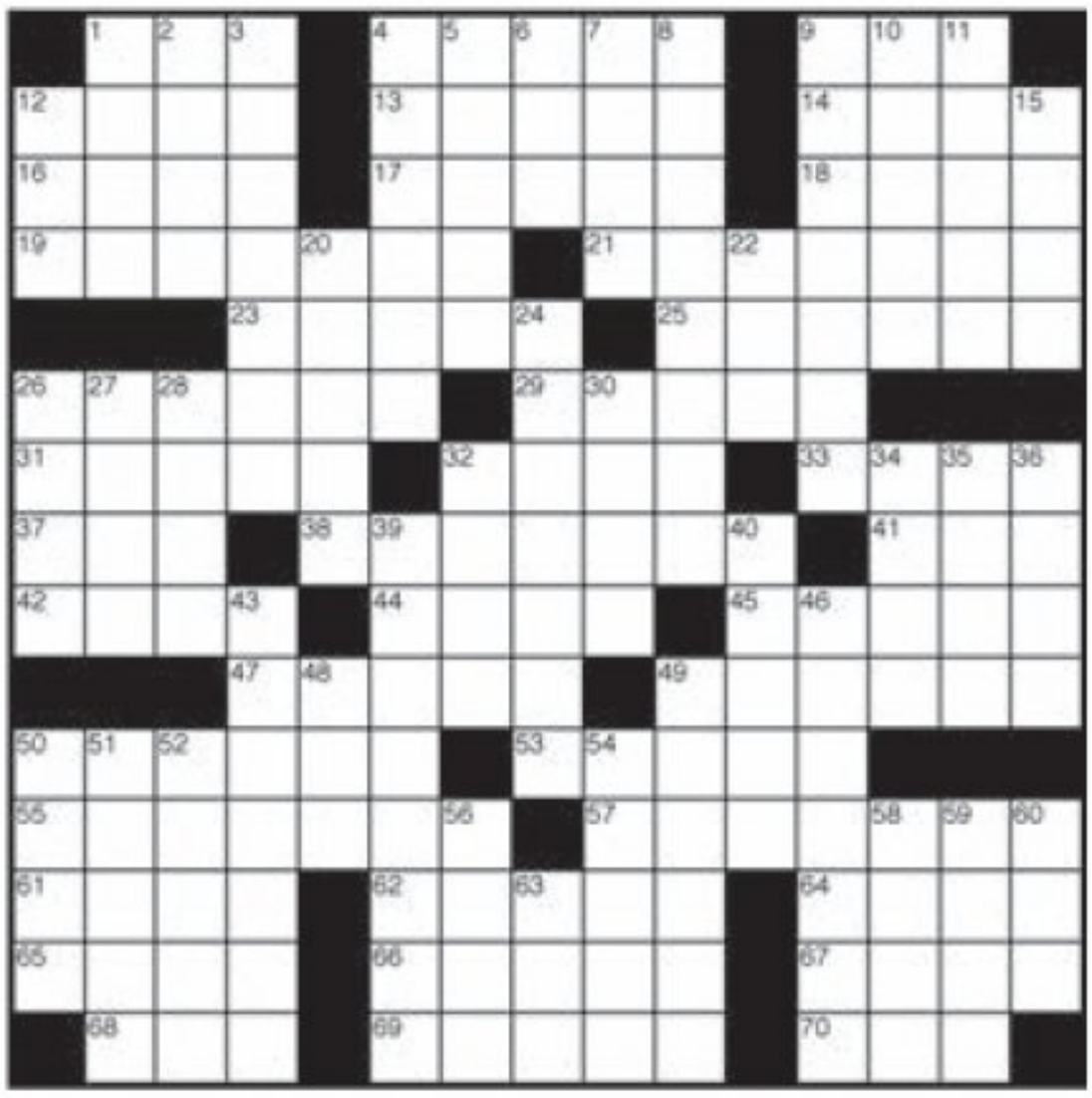
Across

1 Leprechaun kin
4 Blows gently
9 Pro — (for the time being)
12 Even once
13 Newton of physics
14 Canned
16 Tarzan's transport
17 Don Diego masked
18 Agile
19 His home is Nome
21 Luke, to Obi-Wan
23 Welsh dog
25 Hammered in
26 Honda model
29 Faux pas
31 Lower in status
32 Language with clicks
33 Angry disputes
37 Chick's mom
38 Sweet-tempered
41 Prez after Jimmy
42 Baja Ms.
44 Motor lodges
45 Drab color
47 Chain dance
49 Rainbow color
50 Adventurous trip
53 Pitch
55 Most rugged
57 Improved model
61 That's — —!
62 It takes two
64 Classical face
65 Swarm with
66 Hearth residue
67 Grass droplets
68 Kind of humor
69 Bucks, as a horse
70 Common ID

Down

1 Like Mr. Hyde
2 "Girls" star — Dunham
3 Pompeii art
4 Harry Potter, e.g.
5 For — — (cheap)
6 Way off
7 Field cover
8 Haughty
9 More toothsome
10 Oust
11 Enter traffic
12 "The Loco-Motion" girl
15 Did Easter eggs
20 Yellow Sea land
22 Lummox
24 Edible lizards
26 Pleased sighs
27 10-4 buddy
28 Quitter's word
30 White vestments
32 Heartstring sound
34 Uttered
35 Smelled the coffee
36 Agitated state
39 Prime follower
40 Barely scraping by
43 Plato's school
46 Souped-up cars (2 wds.)
48 Natural resource
49 Mist and smoke
50 Clobber
51 Ran a fever
52 Airlines patron
54 Fast sledder
56 Blah
58 City rtes.
59 Daybreak
60 Overhead railways
63 Cavaliers' org.



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easy

6				7			5	
					3			
		9		5			7	1
	7		9	8		5		2
		3	5		2	7		
8		5		3	4		6	
7	8			4		2		
			1					
	1			6				3

hard

		9	1			6		
		1			4		5	2
	5		3	7		4		
			7				2	
3			8		5			6
	8				9			
		4		3	7		6	
5	1		4			9		
		6			1	3		

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Get involved in activities or events that will allow you to show off what you have to offer. A personal change will give you greater stability and tame any insecurity you harbor.

Taurus Spend time with the people who make a difference in your life. Take care of health issues. Consider an alternative approach as well as a traditional method of treatment.

Gemini Don't share personal secrets or beliefs. Someone will take advantage of you if you are too forthcoming. A personal change will help build confidence. Romance is highlighted.

Cancer Refuse to let moodiness take over. You will get more sympathy and workable solutions if you share your concerns without showing anger or criticism. Work with, not against, the majority.

Leo A personal gain will come from an unexpected source. You'll meet someone interesting while traveling or reunite with people from your past. Take your time responding to an offer.

Virgo Socialize with colleagues and you will find out information that will help you get ahead. Don't let anyone limit your chance to try something different

Libra Consider where the information you are receiving is coming from before you let your emotions take over. You are better off critiquing yourself, not others, if you want to avoid discord.

Scorpio Travel outside your usual realm. Getting a broader spectrum will stir your imagination and help you create a personal environment that suits your nature. Let your emotions be your guide.

Sagittarius Put your time into personal improvement. The less you do with people offering indulgent temptations, the easier it will be to take care of business and build a stable future.

Capricorn Use your emotions to your benefit. You can manipulate a situation if you are tactful and persuasive. A deal will have strings attached. Check the fine print.

Aquarius Look at change as a new beginning filled with opportunity and something that will motivate you to learn and expand your interests. Turn a negative into a positive.

Pisces Protect against being judged by someone from a different background by offering an amicable solution to any disagreement that arises.

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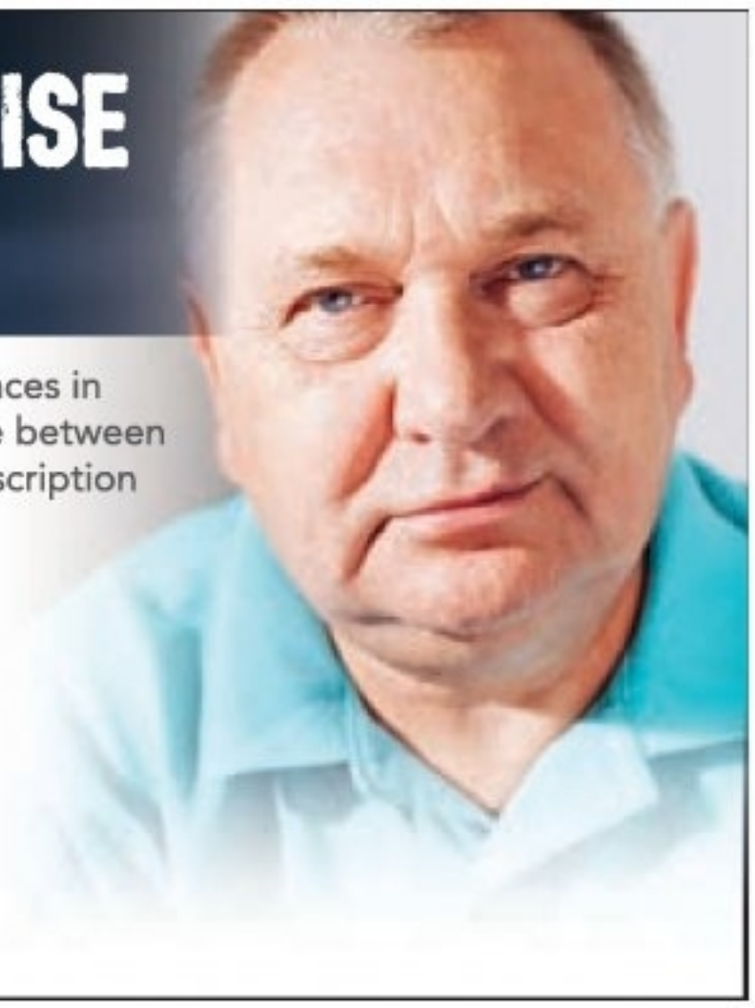

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